

The President's Daily Brief

31 May 1972

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

31 May 1972

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

The situation in Vietnam is discussed on *Page 1*.

The Poles, after several weeks of silence on the President's visit, have begun discussing the trip extensively. (*Page 3*)

Hungary

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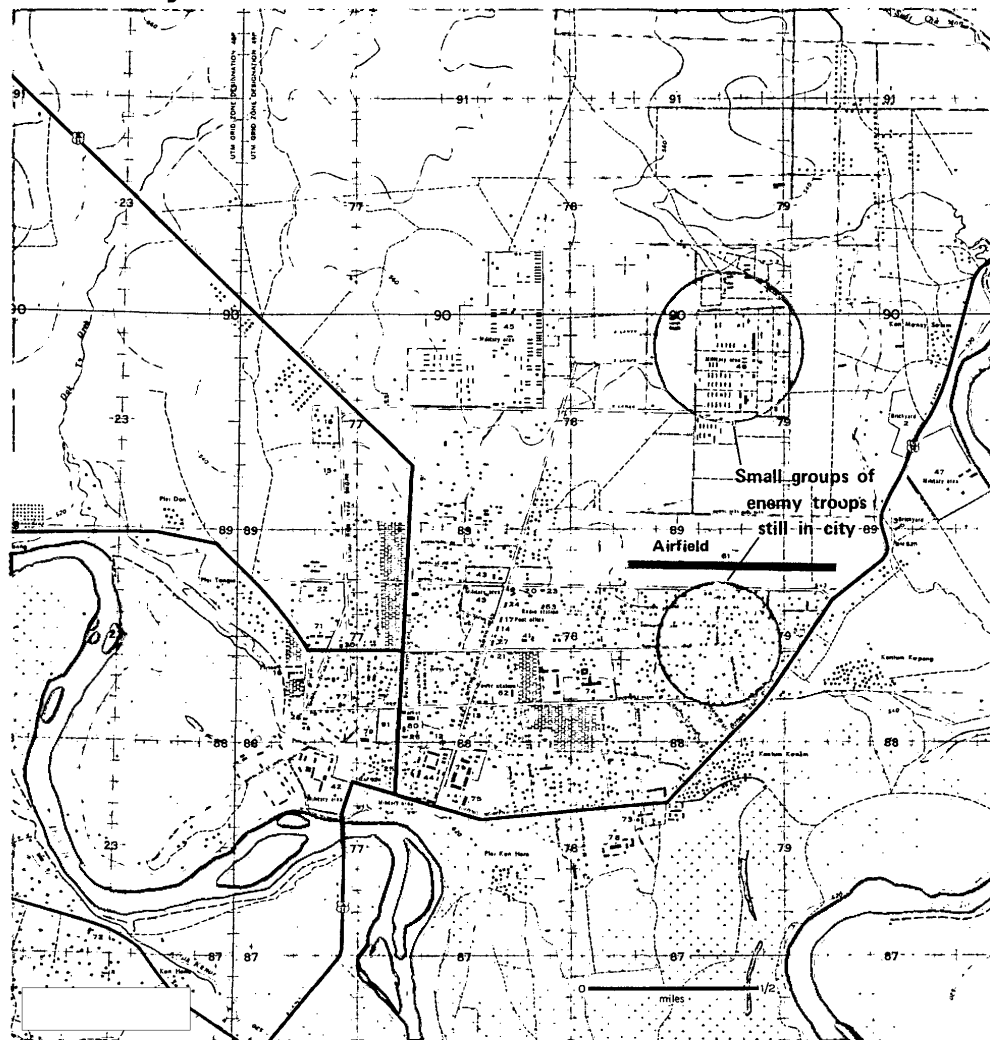
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China's campaign to revitalize cultural activity appears to be gaining momentum. (*Page 6*)

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Kontum City Area



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VIETNAM

Kontum City is still being shelled, and enemy forces still hold sections on the eastern and northern edges of the town, but enemy pressure appears to have let up at least temporarily. Government patrols around the periphery of the city continue to encounter resistance, however, indicating that the enemy is still nearby in strength.

The attacks against Kontum that lasted from 25 to 29 May may represent something less than a maximum effort by the enemy. Two North Vietnamese infantry regiments and two sapper battalions appear to have been the main forces involved in these attacks. Three other infantry regiments deployed near the city could be available for another, stronger attack soon.

In the Hue area, the government's defense line along the My Chanh River appears to have stabilized. The South Vietnamese again hold essentially the same positions they held on 21 May when the latest round of North Vietnamese assaults began. Enemy artillery fire has recently become less intense, although intercepts indicate that an increase is planned.

To the south, at An Loc, a sharp firefight is under way near the main South Vietnamese command post in the city. Much of the enemy force that has besieged An Loc appears to be shifting away, however.

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US bombing has caused some foreign technicians to be withdrawn from projects in North Vietnam, according to intercepts.

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POLAND

Warsaw, after several weeks of silence on President Nixon's visit to Poland, has begun to discuss the trip extensively in the press and in public speeches. (There had been no extensive commentary since announcement of the visit on 19 April, and no mention of it at all since 19 May, the day before the President left the US.) Premier Jaroszewicz said in a speech on 27 May that Poland will receive the President in the spirit of its effort to achieve understanding and cooperation in international affairs. On Monday, a government spokesman disclosed some of the President's itinerary and said that Poland attaches great importance to developing its relations with Washington.

The Poles apparently believe that, in the wake of the successful Moscow summit, they can now discuss the visit more freely. The full itinerary has not been published, however, indicating that Warsaw still wants to discourage large crowds.

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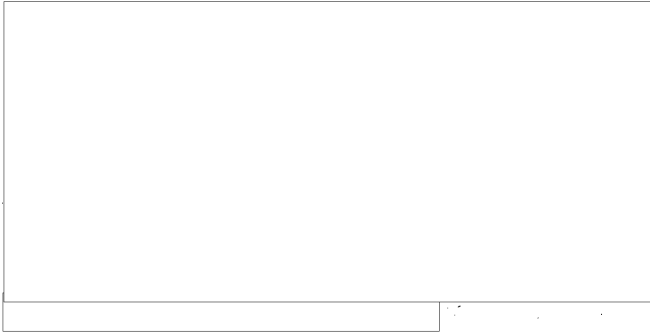
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CHINA

The campaign to revitalize cultural activity, which has been under way since last winter, appears to be gaining momentum.

Last week an editorial appearing in Peking's three leading publications put authority's stamp of approval on an increase in creative work in the cultural sphere. The current phase of the campaign has produced a flurry of cultural exhibitions and forums in Peking and most provincial capitals. More importantly, the regime, as an indication of its seriousness, has resurrected the slogan "let a hundred flowers bloom," thereby calling to mind the period in the 1950s when the party greatly relaxed its restraints on intellectual endeavors.

It is clear, however, that Peking has no intention of permitting the sort of unfettered intellectual activity that produced stinging criticism of the regime during the earlier "hundred flowers" period.

[redacted] the present campaign has the more limited objective of restoring literary and artistic pursuits to the level existing before the Cultural Revolution.

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Even these modest efforts are likely to meet resistance from ultraleftists in Peking who are unwilling to countenance artistic expression that deviates from the handful of model works popularized during and immediately after the Cultural Revolution. The tide seems to be running in favor of raising cultural standards, however, and criticism of certain "left" policies that called for a "liquidation" of literature and art is appearing more frequently.

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NOTE

Kenya: Tribal animosities in the army are coming to a head. Nairobi is feverish with rumors that a "coup" by one faction or another is to occur in the next few days, possibly even tonight (EDT). The tensions are local, and basically arise from a drive for total dominance by the Kikuyu tribe, to which President Kenyatta belongs. Members of another tribe--the Kamba--have long been on top in the military, however, and the Kikuyu want them out. One way or another, the chances of some violent outbreak seem fairly good.

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